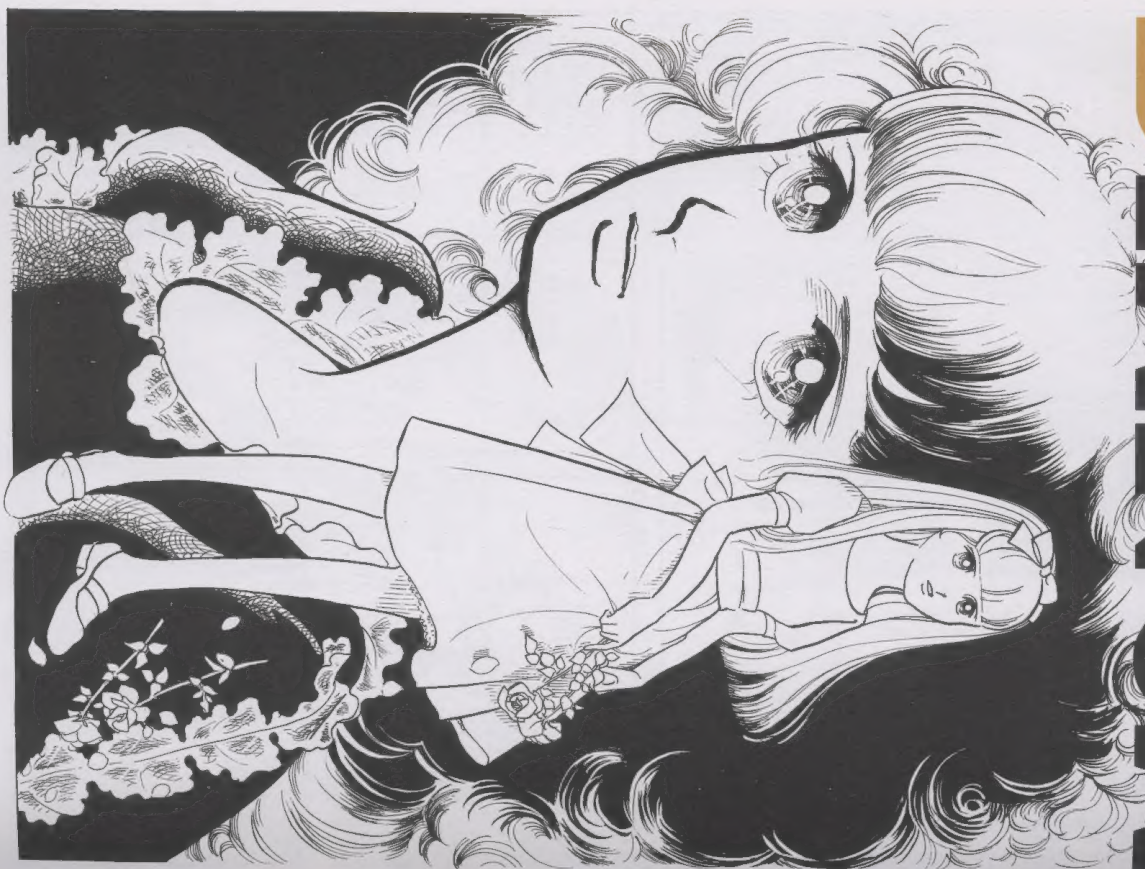
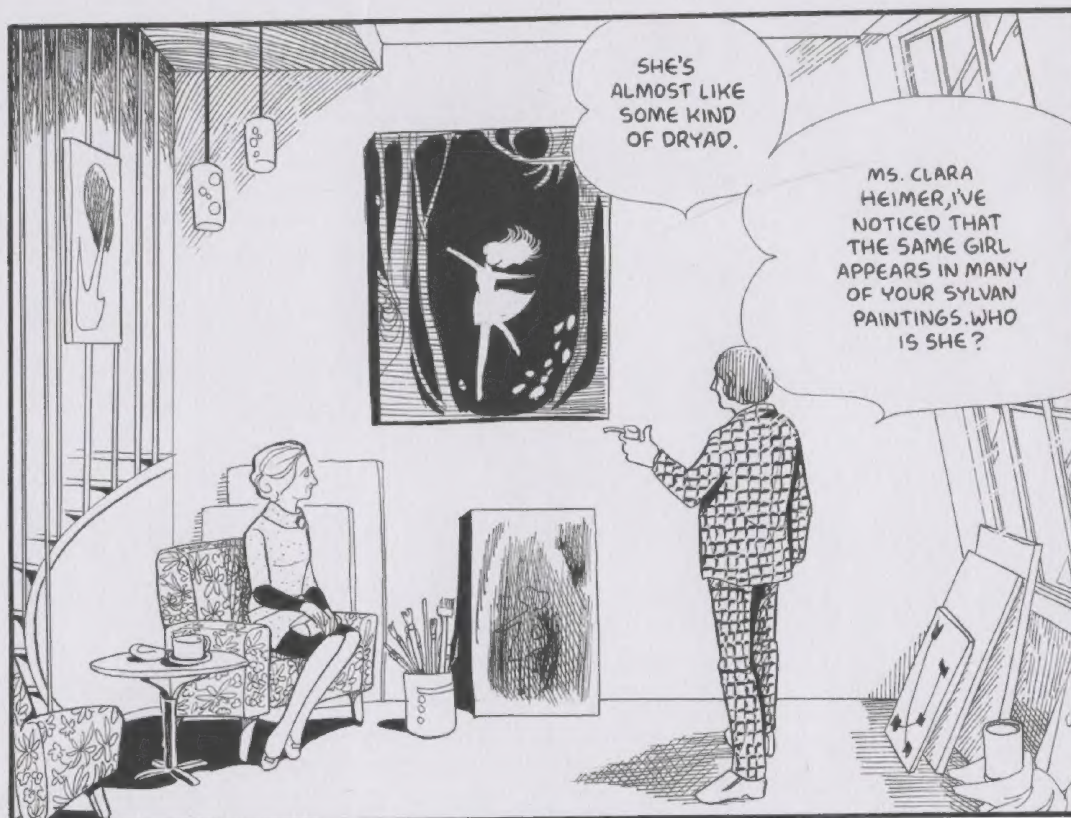
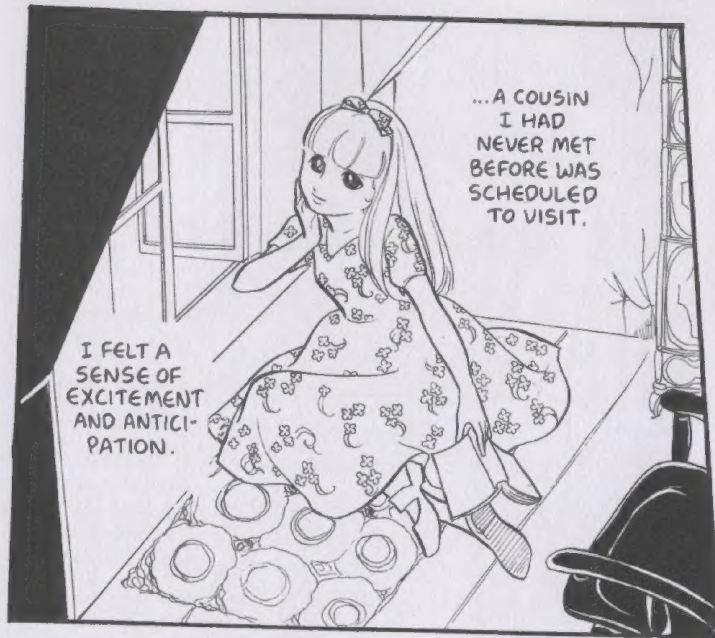


B IANCA





YOU MUST... YOU MUST HAVE VERY FOND MEMORIES OF HER. I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR FACE.

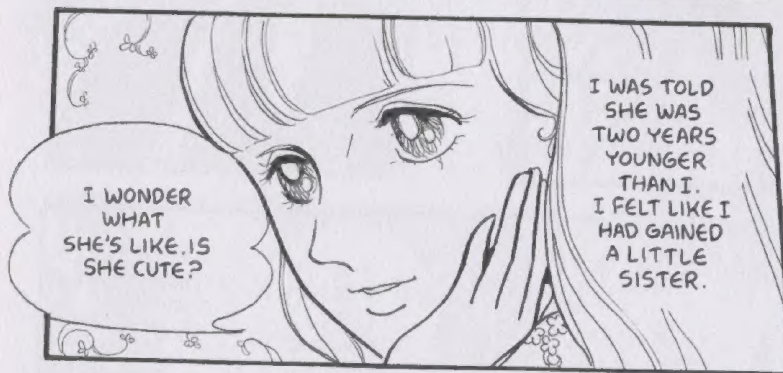


...A COUSIN
I HAD
NEVER MET
BEFORE WAS
SCHEDULED
TO VISIT.

I FELT A
SENSE OF
EXCITEMENT
AND ANTICI-
PATION.

I WAS RAISED IN AN OLD,
COUNTRY HOME WITH A
ROSE GARDEN.

ONE SUMMER MORNING,
WHEN I WAS TWELVE
YEARS OLD...



I WONDER
WHAT
SHE'S LIKE. IS
SHE CUTE?

I WAS TOLD
SHE WAS
TWO YEARS
YOUNGER
THAN I.
I FELT LIKE I
HAD GAINED
A LITTLE
SISTER.

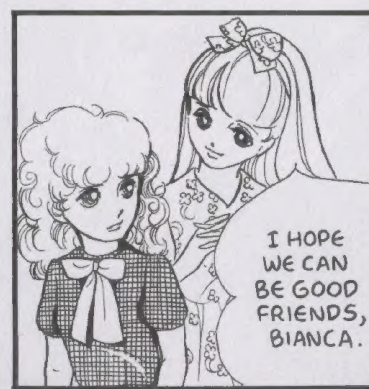
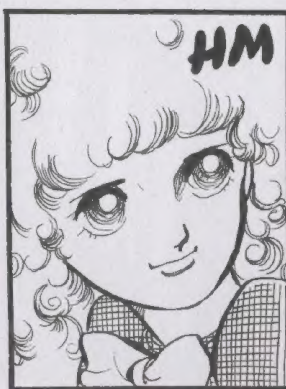
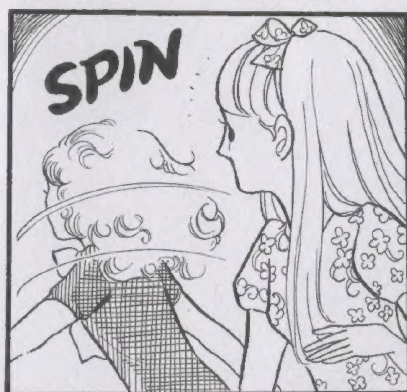
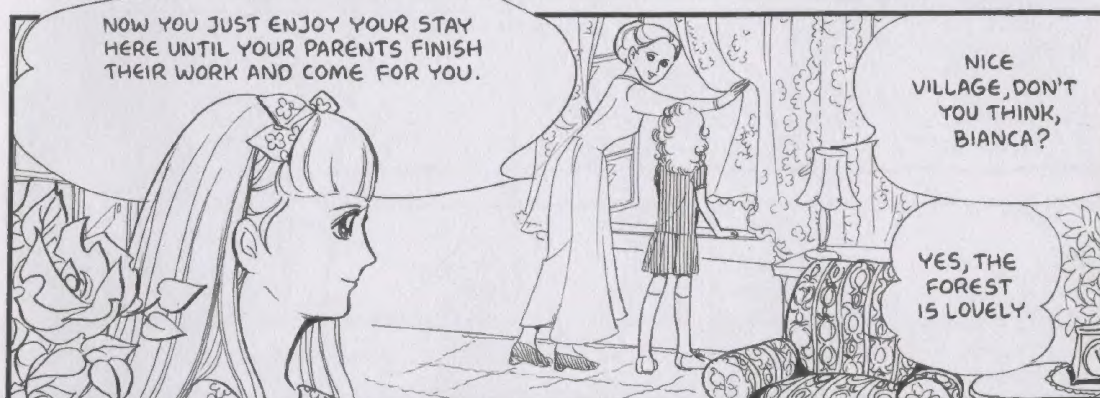
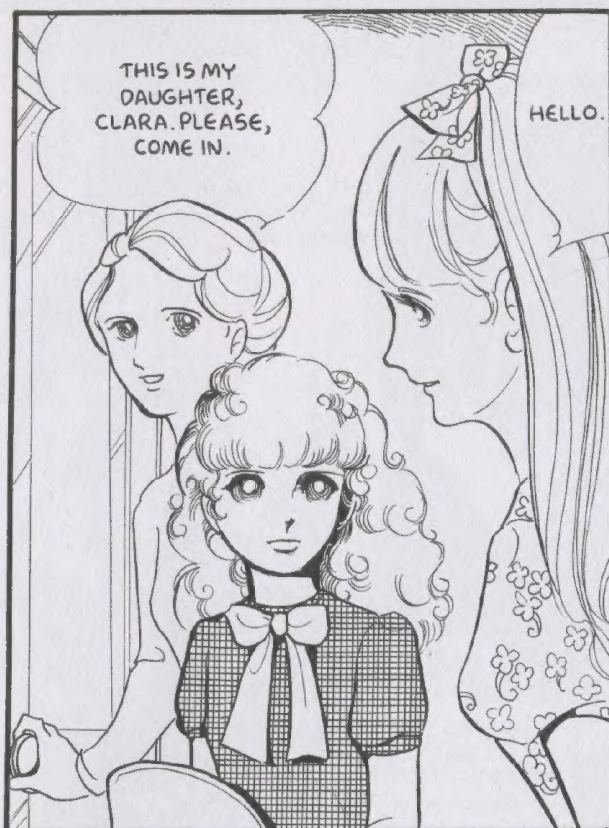


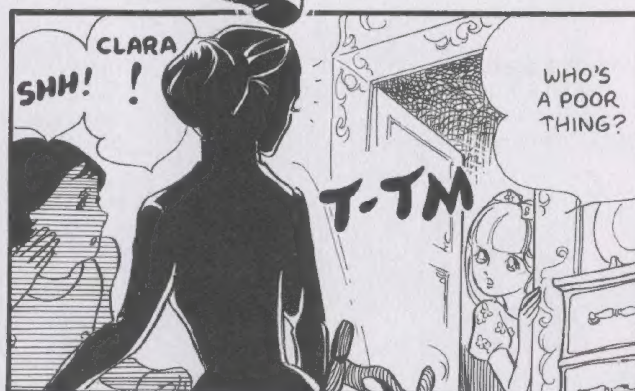
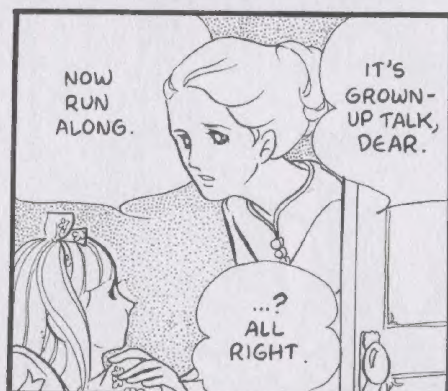
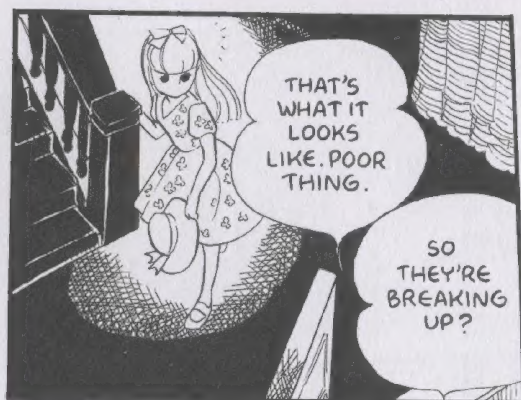
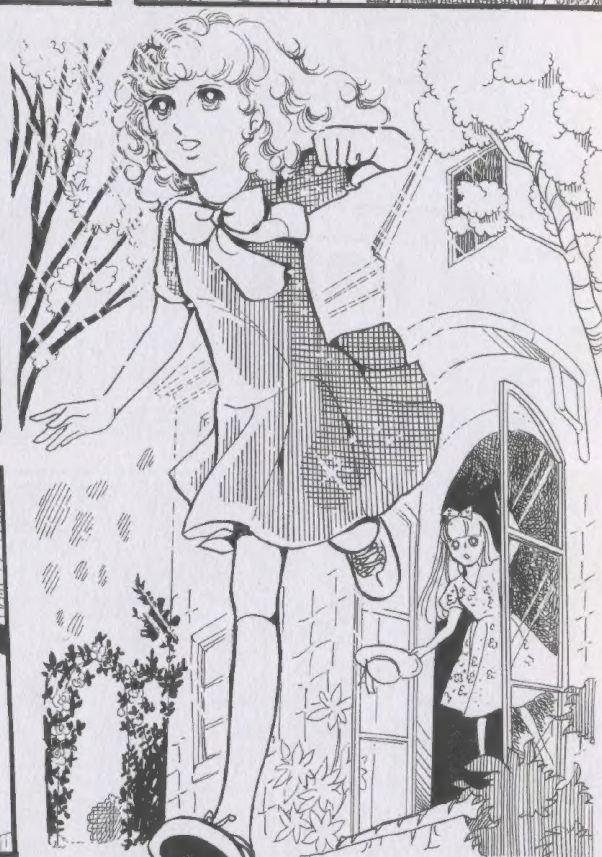
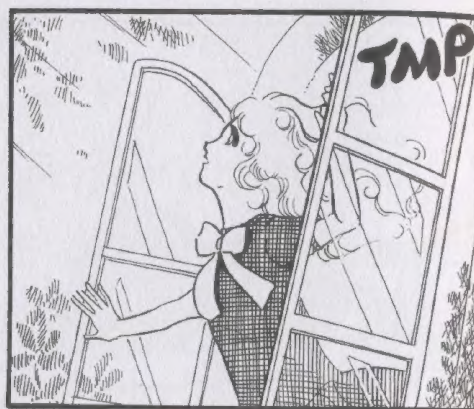
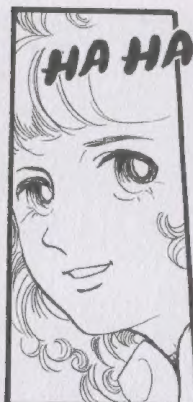
COME
DOWN AND
MEET YOUR
COUSIN,
BIANCA!

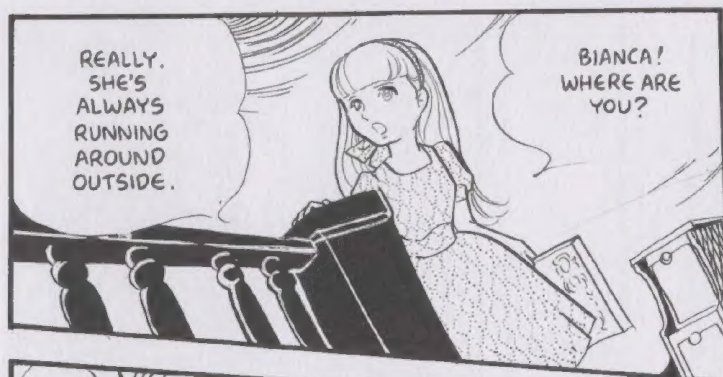


CLARA
!









BIANCA!
WHERE ARE
YOU?



BIAN-
CA-
A-A



KREE

BIA...?



EVERYTHING'S
BACKWARDS IN THE
MIRROR, SO IT'S
VERY SUNNY TODAY.



HOW'S
THE
WEATHER
OVER
THERE?

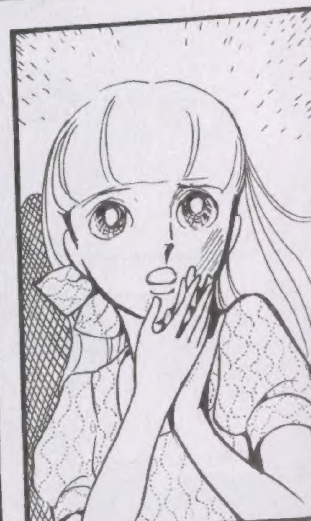
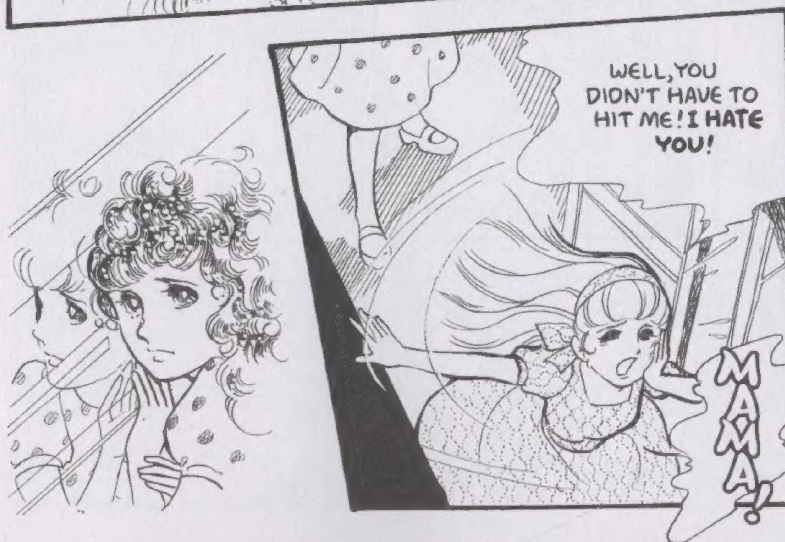
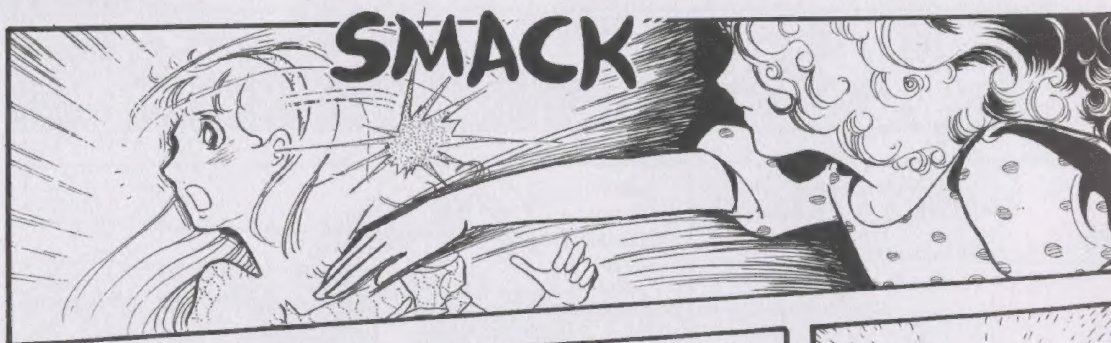
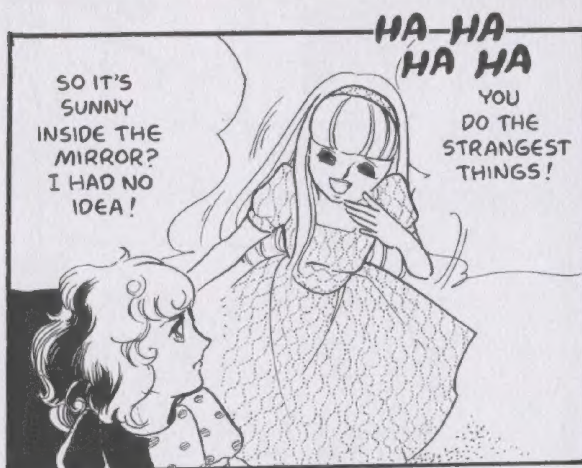
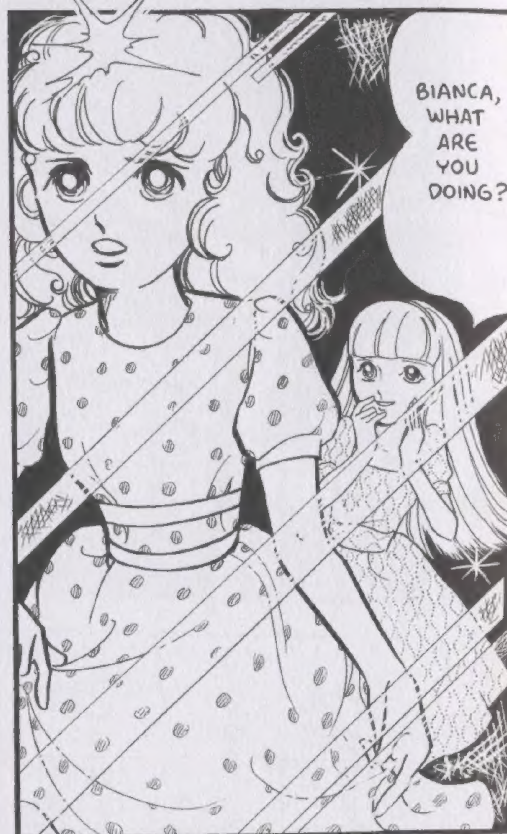
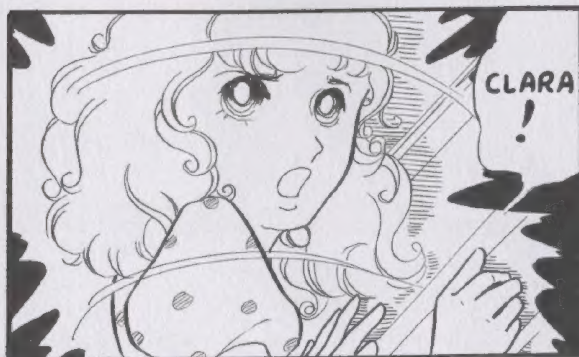


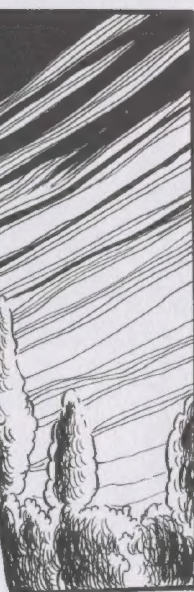
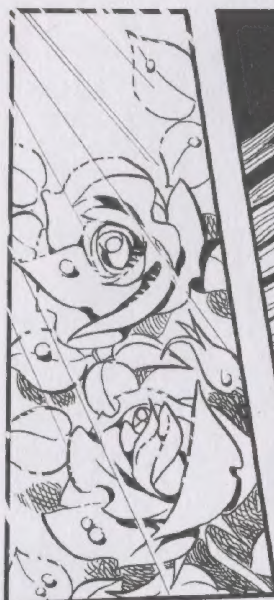
TO THE FOREST.
WOULD YOU
LIKE TO COME
ALONG?

HOW
NICE!
WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?



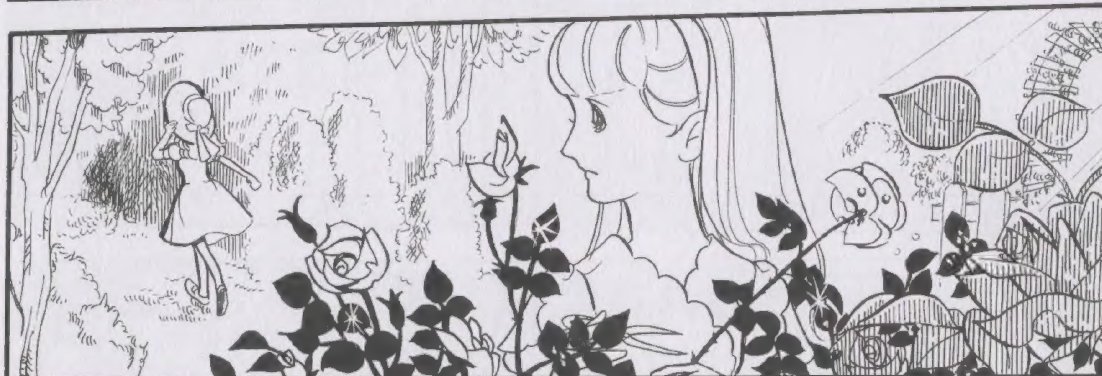
HELLO,
BIANCA
IN THE
MIRROR!



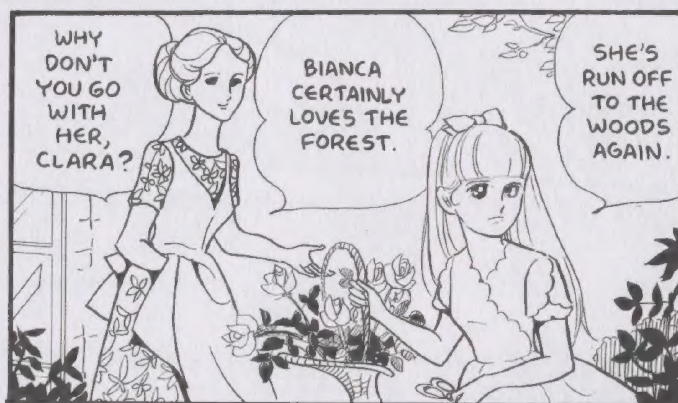


THIS IS NO
FUN AT ALL. AND I
JUST TRIED TO BE
FRIENDS!

LITTLE
SAVAGE!
AND TO
THINK SHE'S
MY COUSIN!



I WONDER WHAT SHE
DOES IN THE WOODS.
JUST WALKING? OR
SOMETHING ELSE...?



WHY
DON'T
YOU GO
WITH
HER,
CLARA?

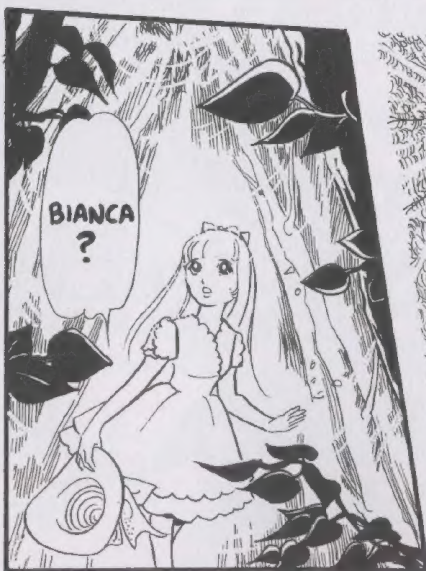
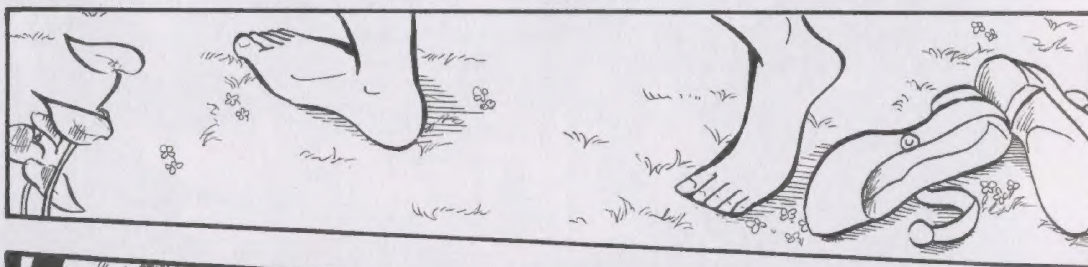
BIANCA
CERTAINLY
LOVES THE
FOREST.

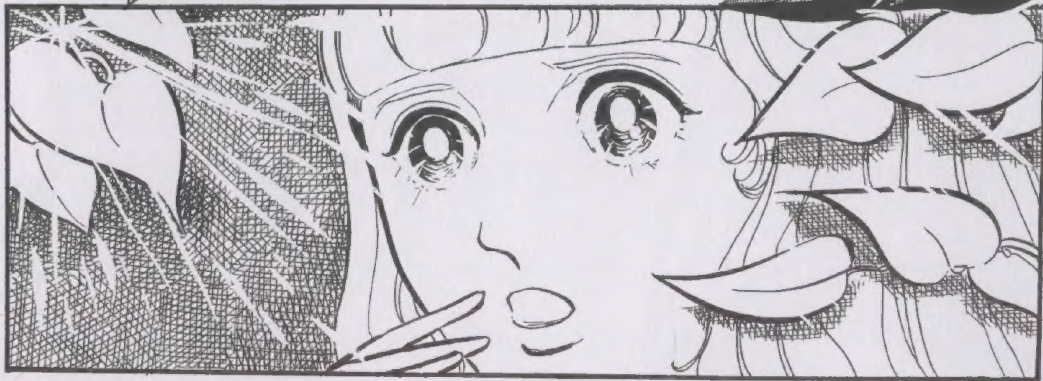
SHE'S
RUN OFF
TO THE
WOODS
AGAIN.



WELL!
THERE'S
SOMETHING
NEW!

ELLIE, GET
MY HAT! I'M
GOING TO THE
WOODS, TOO.



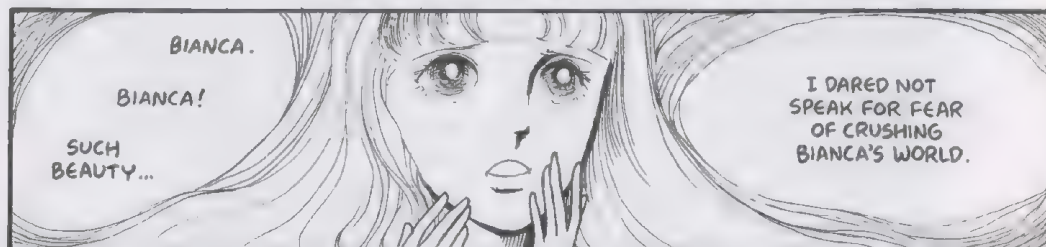




BIANCA WAS DANCING
LIKE THE WIND.

THE FRAGRANCE OF
FRESH, GREEN LEAVES
FILLED THE AIR.

NO HAT, NO SHOES,
NO COAT TO RESTRICT
HER...

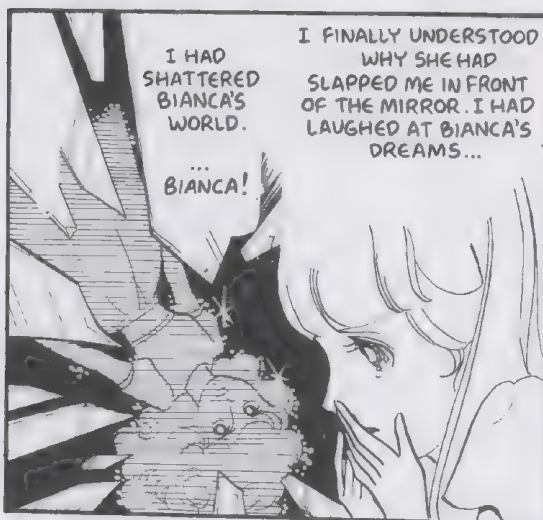


BIANCA.

BIANCA!

SUCH
BEAUTY...

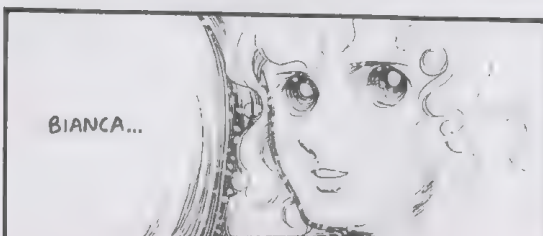
I DARED NOT
SPEAK FOR FEAR
OF CRUSHING
BIANCA'S WORLD.



I HAD
SHATTERED
BIANCA'S
WORLD.

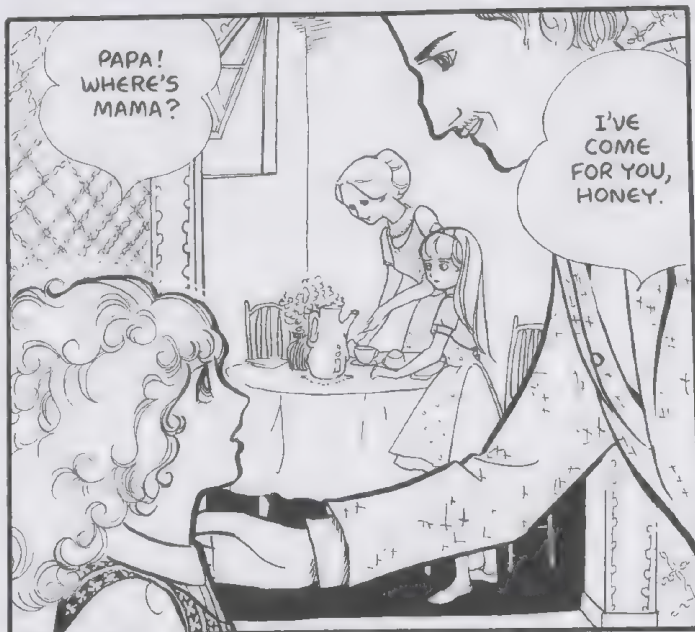
...
BIANCA!

I FINALLY UNDERSTOOD
WHY SHE HAD
SLAPPED ME IN FRONT
OF THE MIRROR. I HAD
LAUGHED AT BIANCA'S
DREAMS...



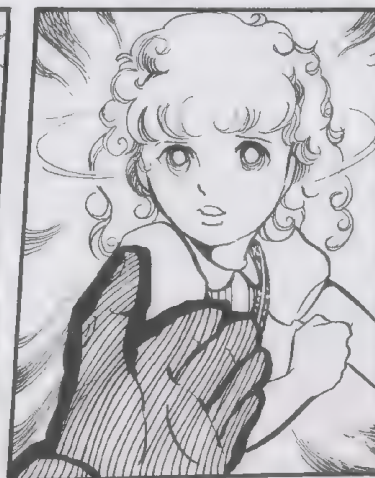
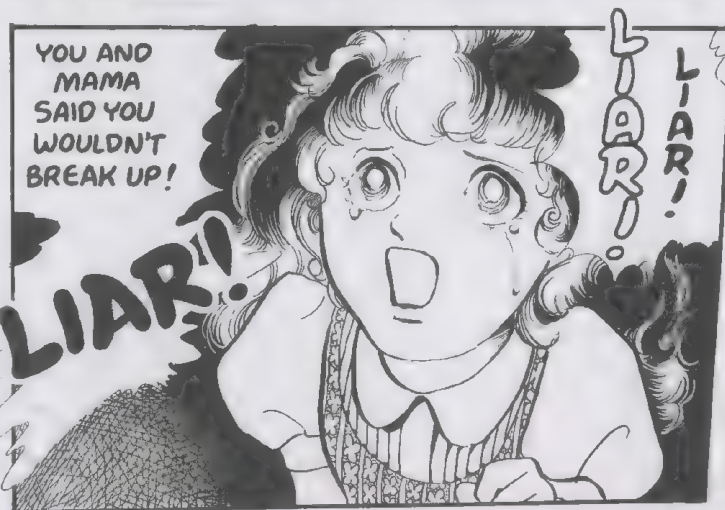
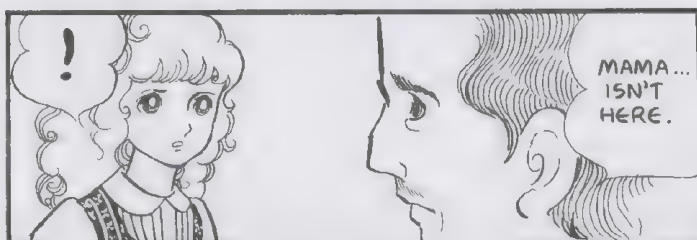
BIANCA...

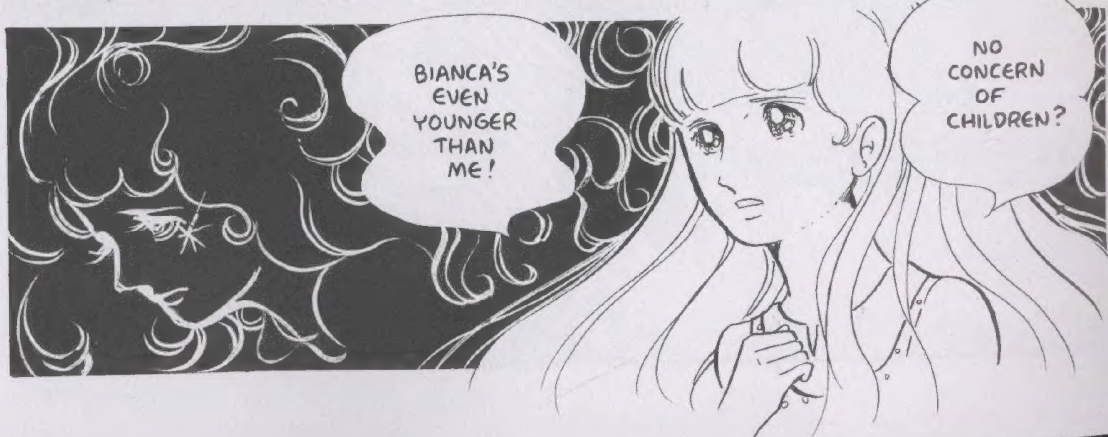
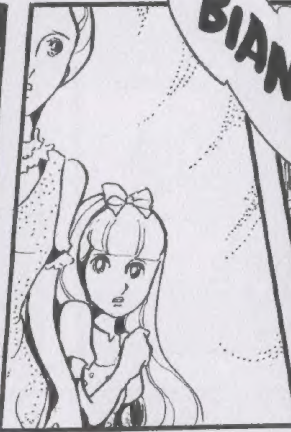
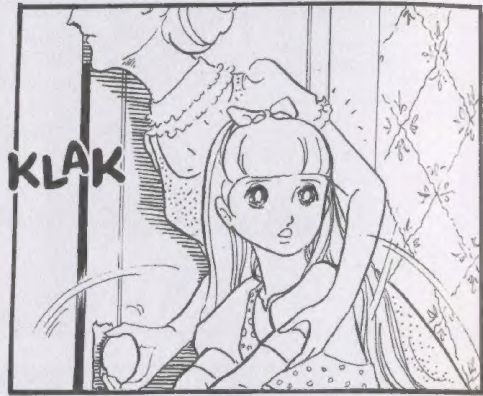
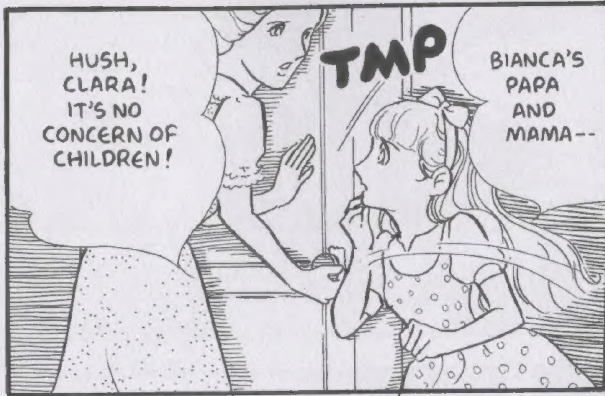


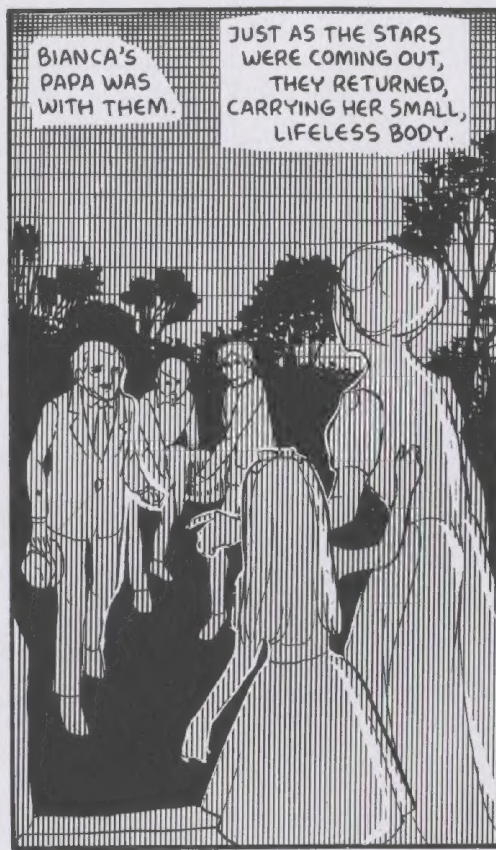
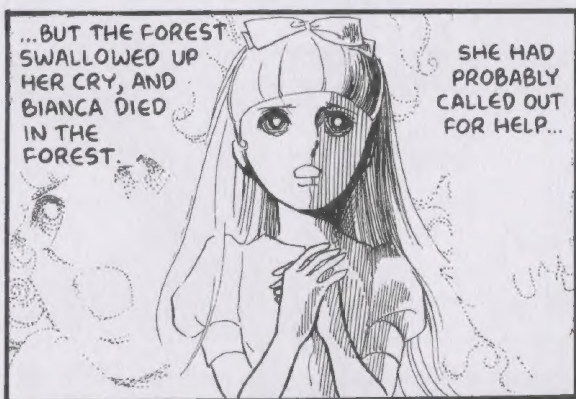
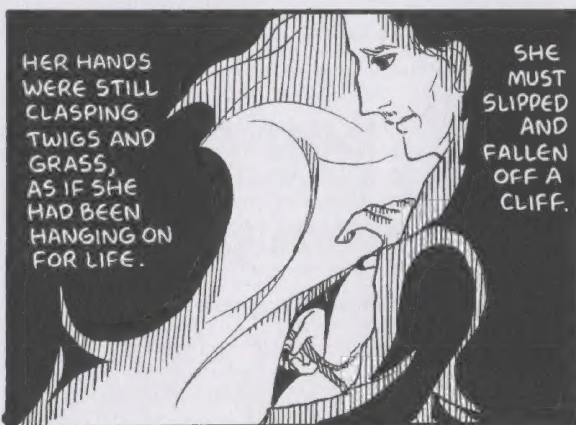


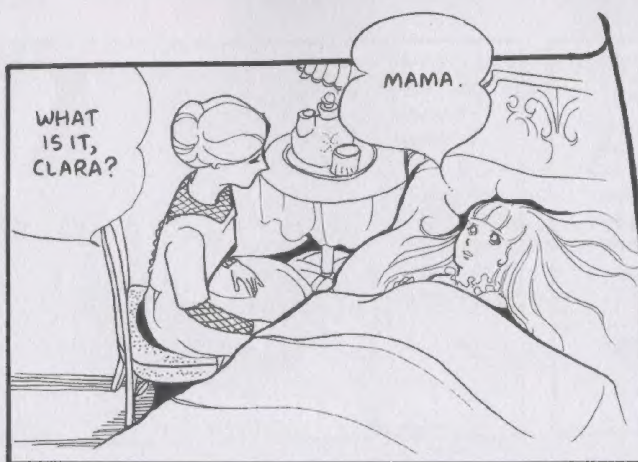
THAT WAS THE FIRST AND
LAST TIME I SAW BIANCA
DANCE IN THE FOREST.

THE NEXT MORNING,
BIANCA'S FATHER
CAME, AND BIANCA...









WHAT IS IT, CLARA?

MAMA.



I KNOW. I SAW.

THE FOREST SUCKED IN BIANCA'S SPIRIT.



BIANCA!

A GIRL WHO SHARED MY LIFE FOR JUST SEVEN DAYS.

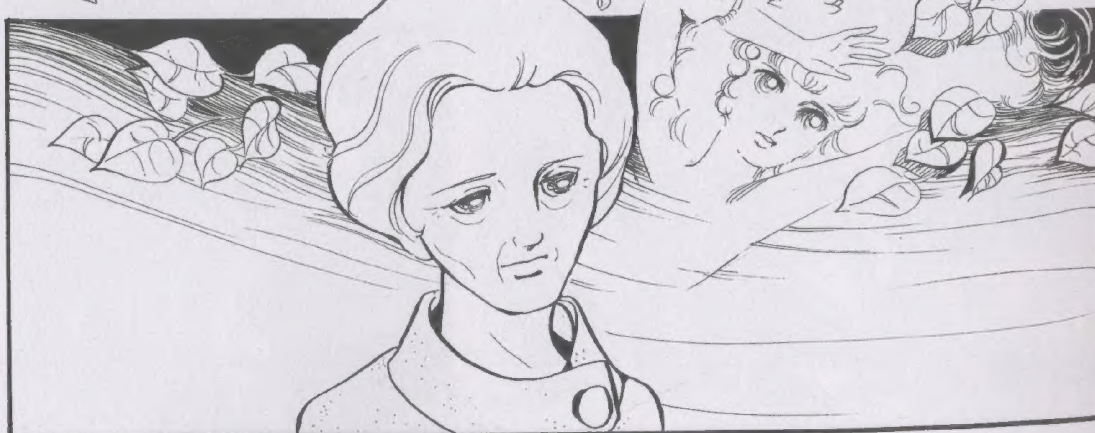
A GIRL WHO WAS THERE BEFORE ME FOR JUST SEVEN DAYS.

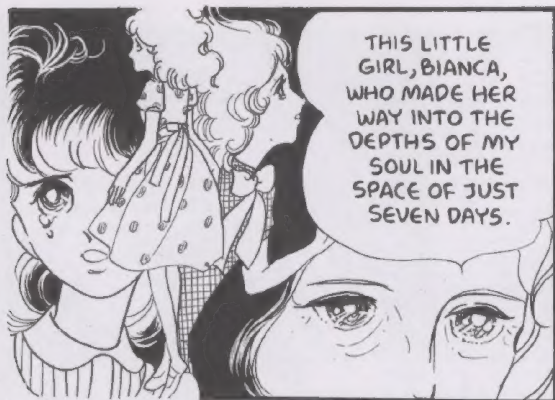


...I WOULDN'T WANT TO LET HER GO. I WOULD HAVE MADE HER DIE IN THE FOREST EVEN IF IT MEANT THROWING HER IN THE RIVER OR BURYING HER IN THE SOIL.

IF I WERE THE FOREST...

I SAW WHAT SHE DID IN THE FOREST.





THIS LITTLE GIRL, BIANCA, WHO MADE HER WAY INTO THE DEPTHS OF MY SOUL IN THE SPACE OF JUST SEVEN DAYS.



AND THAT IS WHY I PAINT THIS LITTLE GIRL.

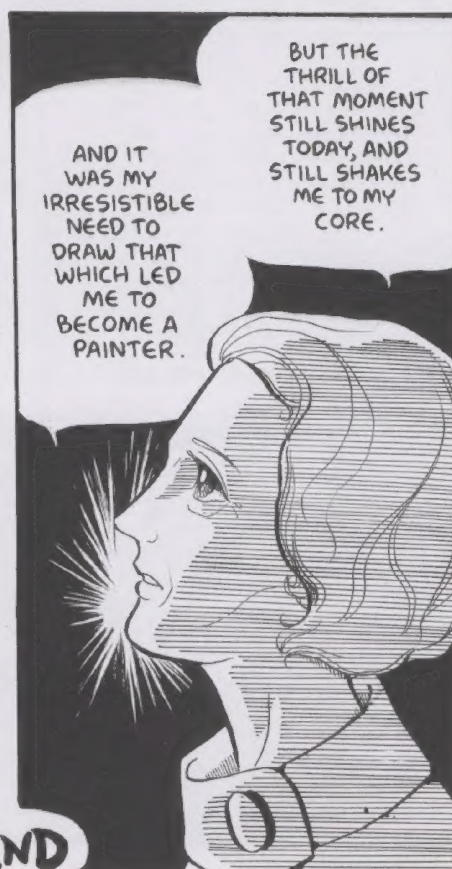


I STILL CAN'T DESCRIBE IT. THE ONLY WITNESSES WERE THE FOREST AND ME.

I SAW THE WIND. I SAW A DANCER. I SAW THE WORLD OF A GIRL WHO HAD BECOME ONE WITH THE FOREST.

THE WAY SHE DANCED...THE WAY IT MADE ME FEEL...I CAN'T DESCRIBE IT IN WORDS.

BIANCA, WHO DANCED IN THE FOREST.



AND IT WAS MY IRRESISTIBLE NEED TO DRAW THAT WHICH LED ME TO BECOME A PAINTER.

BUT THE THRILL OF THAT MOMENT STILL SHINES TODAY, AND STILL SHAKES ME TO MY CORE.

END